

Senate to Probe ABM Effect on SALT

By Warren Unna
Washington Post Staff Writer

Members of the Senate Foreign Relations Committee reacted to President Nixon's new budget yesterday by announcing an investigation into its provisions for an open-end anti-ballistic missile program. The senator questioned how the ABM and the continued development of the multi-headed offensive missile called the MIRV might interfere with disarmament talks with the Russians.

Chairman Albert Gore (D-Tenn.) of the Senate Disarmament Subcommittee said the President's request for \$1.5 billion to proceed with the ABM confirmed his suspicions that this year's bitterly fought \$892 million ABM outlay was "just a camel's nose under the tent."

Senate Minority Whip Robert P. Griffin (R-Mich.) also was hesitant about the budget's ABM request. "I am inclined to give the President the benefit of the doubt, but I am also waiting for the justification," he said.

Overall, however, Griffin said he was "gratified" to find the President had "kept his pledge for a balanced budget" and reordered priorities from defense spending to human resources.

Griffin said that only 37 per cent of the new budget was for defense, while 41 per cent would be for human resources. In 1961, he recalled, it was 48 per cent for defense and only 30 per cent for human resources.

However, Senate Majority Leader Mike Mansfield (D-Mont.) said the President, while requesting less defense money than he had last year, was still asking more (\$71.1 billion) than Congress had appropriated (\$70.8 billion). In foreign military grant aid, Mansfield said, the new budget seeks \$104 million more than the \$350 million limit the Congress set for the current fiscal year.

Mansfield warned that the President's new budget "contains seed" many (military) systems that will cost tens of billions in

the future years if the initial commitment is made this year."

The Senate Disarmament Subcommittee hearing yesterday appeared to be the kick-off for the real opposition to the military side of the budget.

The hearing was a scheduled closed-door briefing from Gerard Smith, director of the U.S. Arms Control and Disarmament Agency, on the administration's plans for the Strategic Arms Limitation Talks (SALT) with the Russians in Vienna this April.

But since Gore's subcommittee includes some of the most outspoken opponents of the ABM, questioning immediately centered on the President's Friday night announcement that he would go ahead with ABM deployment and his budget request for more money to make this possible.

Gore would say only that Smith had been "very helpful, very candid" behind the closed doors. But, on his own, the senator warned that the push ahead with ABM and the MIRV deployment "could not possibly be helpful" in stemming an armaments race with the Russians.

The Tennessee senator then announced that Smith's appearance meant the start of a new series of hearings which will include testimony by CIA Director Richard Helms, Defense Secretary Melvin R. Laird, Secretary of State William P. Rogers and "particularly" Pentagon research and development officials concerned with the ABM's workability.

"It is a subject of such great moment, fraught with such grave costs and dangers, that it is necessary for the legislative branch to be fully informed and the American people fully involved with later public hearings," Gore said.

Sen. Clifford Case (R-N.J.), the subcommittee's ranking minority member, stressed that the probe would be "nonpartisan."

In the House, Majority Leader Carl Albert (D-Okl.) said that the fine print in the overall Nixon budget revealed "a wide disparity between the rhetoric... and the cold hard figures as to recommended appropria-

tions, indicating what he actually plans to spend for various environment programs."

Rep. Chet Holifield (D-Calif.) said that although the President recently announced a \$10 billion clean water program, his new budget seeks only \$330 million to fight both air and water pollution. Last year, Holifield recalled, the President requested "only" \$214 million for these programs and refused to use the almost \$600 million more Congress gave him to spend. The White House recently said all the money would be spent.

Rep. Charles A. Vanik (D-Ohio) said the budget's cutback of water pollution research funds from this year's \$30.7 million to Fiscal 1971's \$44.6 million "indicates more puff than performance."

But House Minority Leader Gerald R. Ford (R-Mich.) and Rep. Frank T. Bow (R-Ohio) applauded the President for presenting a budget which promises a \$1.3 billion surplus without having to resort to new or higher taxes.

Sen. Charles H. Percy (R-Ill.) termed the surplus "absolutely crucial" to combatting inflation. He cautioned his colleagues not to weigh down the budget with amendments for additional expenditures.

Percy said he would follow a policy of not introducing any additional appropriation measures unless he twinned this with either an amendment for cutting back on some other measures or an amendment for establishing some new source of revenue.

"I would not hesitate to extend the surtax if that were the only alternative," the Illinois senator said of the measure which is due to expire June 30.

Canada 'Unhappy' Over ABM Go-Ahead

Special to The Washington Post

OTTAWA, Feb. 2—The Canadian government is "rather unhappy" that the United States is facing China with antiballistic missiles rather than with an offer of diplomatic recognition, Prime Minister Trudeau told Commons today.

Trudeau was commenting on President Nixon's proposal

to proceed with the second stage of the Safeguard ABM system to protect U.S. targets from possible attack from long-range nuclear missiles.

Trudeau admitted under questioning that there has been no evidence that the ABM program has escalated the arms race. However, he added, "We feel that our approach to the People's Republic of China, and the negotiations going on in Stockholm, are certainly a better way in the long run to protect the world from war than in a continuance of the arms race."

(Canadian and Chinese diplomats in Stockholm have been negotiating on mutual recognition and exchange of missions since last February.)

"The Canadian government is rather unhappy that a friend and ally of such importance should be seeing its way to peace in this direction (ABMs), rather than in the direction I have just suggested," Trudeau said.

Soviet Buildup Causes Uncertainty

U.S. Undecided on SALT Plan

By Chalmers M. Roberts
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The Nixon administration, now beginning the task of working up proposals for the strategic arms talks which resume in Vienna on April 16, is beset by uncertainty about the rapid buildup of Soviet missiles.

As a result, American officials are unsure about what the United States should propose as an agreement to curb the arms race. No firm decision is expected until late March or even early April when the issues have been aired at the National Security Council table and President Nixon makes the decision.

Last November, before the American delegation went to Helsinki for the initial round with the Russians on what are known as the SALT talks, Washington tipped off Moscow that no United States proposal would be tossed on the table. It was added that Washington hoped Moscow also would refrain.

The American move came after Mr. Nixon overruled proposals that the United States offer a ban on further testing of multiple independently targeted re-entry vehicles, known as MIRVs. As it turned out, both sides refrained from offering proposals.

Instead, each side sought to learn more of the other's thinking about the arms race. The result, as the Helsinki joint statement put it, was that "each side is better able to understand the views of the other with respect to the problems under consideration."

But there was no Soviet explanation satisfactory to the Americans of why the

Soviet Union is building so many mammoth SS-9 missiles. Herein lies the crux of the problem now facing the United States.

The SS-9 began to be deployed in 1965 as a missile with a single warhead packing a nuclear punch of between 12 and 25 megatons. But in August, 1968, tests of a multiple warhead began and American estimates—partly from watching the tests—are that each of three separate warheads is capable of delivering a punch of as much as 5 megatons. A 5-megaton blast would be the equivalent of 5 million tons of TNT. The 1945 Hiroshima A-bomb was the equivalent of 20,000 tons.

Defense Secretary Melvin R. Laird last year raised alarms that the SS-9 was a first-strike weapon, that is that it might be used in a nuclear Pearl Harbor attack on the United States. He since has somewhat retreated from this view but another and perhaps more likely thesis about its potential can now be heard within the American government.

The Soviet Union now has deployed or is deploying close to 300 of the SS-9s and it is estimated the total

would reach around 400 by fall. In addition, some consider it possible that the Soviets will improve the other ICBMs in their inventory, SS-11s and SS-13s, thus surpassing the American force. Expected accuracy of these missiles would enable the Soviets to destroy the bulk if not all of the American land-based ICBMs of which the Minuteman force of 1000 is the core.

Why Moscow should want such a capability is the unanswered question as of

now. The latest theory is that it would be used, not for a first strike to destroy the American ICBM force in a surprise attack, but as a weapon of diplomatic blackmail in an international crisis.

Any American President, it is argued, would feel very uncomfortable to put it militarily if in a Soviet-American

crisis confrontation, he knew he could not count on the Minutemen to strike a retaliatory blow.

The standard answer in the past has been that the United States also possesses a vast Polaris submarine capability plus bombers and fighter-bombers, both land-based in Western Europe and the United States and sea-based on carriers, which could carry nuclear weapons to the Soviet Union even if all the Minutemen were knocked out.

But there is increasing worry that the Polaris system sooner or later will lose what is thought today to be its invulnerability beneath the seas. And there are skeptics about the ability of airplanes to penetrate Soviet defensive systems now in place. A study of Polaris vulnerability is now under way in connection with the SALT talk preparations.

It also is noted that the Soviet Union's SS-9 program seems to be going ahead on the assumption that its land-based missiles are invulnerable to American attack. As of today the Soviets have some 1200 such ICBMs compared to the United States' 1054.

These facts, plus the near end of the American MIRV test series and the continuing problems of the rival antiballistic missile (ABM) defense systems, has made 1970 a year of critical decision if the arms race is to be curbed, it is widely felt in Washington.

Thus the arms controllers now are trying to construct a proposal or series of proposals to be offered at the Vienna phase of the SALT talks, if not initially then soon thereafter.

Current thinking centers on a simple limitation on the number of ICBMs each side can deploy. This could be verified by so-called "national means of detection" which is an euphemism for observation satellites. This limitation would be tied to an agreed limitation on rival ABM systems, admittedly

difficult to reduce to treaty form.

The ABM limitation probably would permit the current level of development in the Soviet Union and the Safeguard system now getting under way in the United States, both more useful in terms of possible attacks by either the Soviet Union or the United States against the other.

Some here also believe it is not yet too late to hold off the MIRVing of the ICBMs but others think this development has passed the point of no return. To be certain that such multiple warheads were not put on the ICBMs would require on-site inspection in both countries that neither is likely to accept. Indeed, most arms controllers believe that any agreement this year must avoid any on-site inspection.

What is evident is that if there is to be any possibility of a Soviet-American arms agreement at the SALT talks President Nixon will have to approve the taking of risks. The Administration has sought to identify such risks and to compare them with the risks of letting the arms race go on unfettered.

Some believe that if there is no agreement by summer, or fall at the latest, the President will be faced with great pressure to approve new American weapons systems to counter the growing Soviet ICBM numbers. One proposal being seriously studied is known as ULMS, or underwater long-range missile system. ULMS is a new submarine-launched missile system costing billions.

Some arms controllers, hoping that Mr. Nixon will take some risks in putting forward SALT proposals, think that the financial compulsions will come into play in the decision-making here. Others say that the President's examination thus far of the problem has yet to center on the cost factor if there is no agreement.

Some experts argue that even if there is an agreement, the American land-

based missile system is already obsolescent and soon will be obsolete; thus the United States should go to an all-sea based system plus aircraft. One line of reasoning here is that this would buy time to find new ways to curb the arms race.

At Helsinki, the American negotiating team felt, the Soviet Union accepted the principle of what in the United States is called mutual deterrence; that is, that each nation possess enough nuclear weapons to destroy the other but not enough superiority to risk a first strike without having to fear an equally damaging retaliatory strike.

Ever since the Cuban missile crisis of 1962 the Kremlin has worked at closing its missile gap with the United States. President Nixon has recognized this by accepting the thesis that "sufficiency" in such weapons is enough for the United States, that "superiority" is not necessary.

In the apple and oranges equation of nuclear capabilities the two nations are now roughly at parity. Where the Kremlin wants to go is unknown here. Where the United States will go is likely to be determined by Mr. Nixon in the decisions he makes before the SALT talks resume on April 16.